



Trinity College

HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

Good evening Chairpersons and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Sarah Raskin and I am a neuropsychologist and faculty member at Trinity College. My work involves research into ways to improve the lives of people with brain injury. I have had the honor of facilitating a support group through the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut for 15 years and served on the Board of Directors for two years. I would like to submit testimony against the elimination of the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut's operating grant.

Since receiving my doctorate I have slowly seen services for people with brain injury dwindle. In my first position at Mount Sinai Medical Center the average stay for a person after a traumatic brain injury was six months. The latest data suggest that it is now 20 days for acute care and 30 days for rehabilitation care. The vast majority are sent home with no further treatment. The severity of impact of these injuries has not changed, however.

So, what happens, then, when people go home after having a brain injury? Typically they are in need of considerable services, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and

counseling. Frequently they are unable to work and personal relationships are strained. There is nowhere for them to get information about their condition, find out about what services are available, or talk to others in similar situations, nowhere other than the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut. Without the Brain Injury Association, I have no doubt that rates of re-hospitalization and re-injury due to unresolved physical and cognitive conditions will go way up, leading to much greater costs to the state.

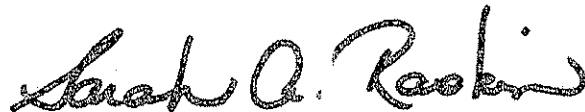
The Brain Injury Association of Connecticut is the first, and often, the only source for information and services. I have seen first-hand many individuals for whom the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut was their only hope, their only guide through a long and difficult process. Brain injury affects not just the body but also a person's ability to think, remember, pay attention or problem-solve. It can affect one's very personality.

I have worked with a young veteran who needed help obtaining special services when he returned to college, a young woman who needed to be retrained for return to work, and an older man trying to understand his benefits all find the help they needed from the Brain Injury Association.

As veteran's return from combat, an aging population experiences strokes, and rates of motor vehicle related injuries

continue to climb the need for the services provided by the Brain
Injury Association will get bigger every day.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah A. Raskin". The signature is written in dark ink and is centered on the page.

Sarah A. Raskin, Ph.D. ABBP/ABCN
Department of Psychology and Neuroscience Program